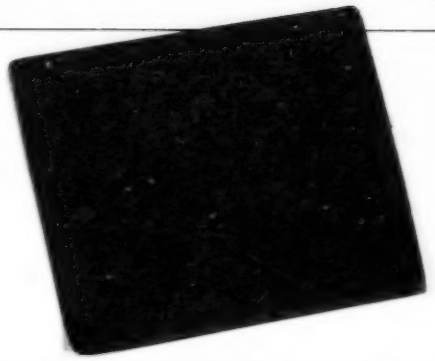
United Nations A/CN.10/PV.217

General Assembly

Disarmament Commission

Official Records



217th Meeting
Tuesday, 2 December 1997, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Garcia . . . . . (Colombia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chairman: I declare open the 1997 organizational session and the 217th meeting of the Disarmament Commission.

As in past years, the Commission is convened today for a brief session to deal with organizational matters related to the 1998 substantive session, including the election of a new Bureau for 1998, the appointment of the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission and the draft provisional agenda for the substantive session.

Adoption of the agenda (A/CN.10/L.41)

The Chairman: If I hear no objections, I take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the agenda for this organizational session as contained in document A/CN.10/L.41.

The agenda was adopted.

Election of the Chairman and other officers

The Chairman: The third item on our agenda today is the election of the Chairman and other officers of the Disarmament Commission for 1998.

It is my understanding that consultations are still being carried out in the regional groups with regard to their candidacies for the Bureau of the Commission for 1998. I would suggest, therefore, that this item be taken up at a later meeting.

It was so decided.

Review of the draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee at the fifty-second session of the General Assembly relating to the Disarmament Commission

The Chairman: As members of the Commission are aware, the First Committee of the General Assembly has adopted three draft resolutions which have specific requests in connection with the work of the Commission. For the sake of clarity and for the benefit of the members of the Commission, I would like to refer to those draft resolutions, which will soon be adopted by the Assembly.

First and foremost, I wish to refer to draft resolution A/C.1/52/L.21, adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 73 (*a*), entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

The relevant paragraphs of the draft resolution, namely operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7, read as follows:

> "5. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to continue its work in accordance with its mandate, as set forth in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, and with paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 37/78 H of 9 December 1982, and to that end to make every effort to achieve specific recommendations on the items of its agenda, taking into account the adopted 'Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission';

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"6. *Recommends* that, pursuant to the adopted three-item phased approach, the Disarmament Commission, at its 1997 organizational session, adopt the following items for consideration at its 1998 substantive session:

"(a) The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned;

"(b) The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;

"(c) Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N;

"7. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding four weeks during 1998 and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session;".

The second draft resolution is A/C.1/52/L.11/Rev.1, adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 71 (*e*), entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament: report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament".

Operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 read as follows:

"1. *Decides*, subject to the emergence of consensus on its objectives and agenda, to convene its fourth special session devoted to disarmament;

"2. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Disarmament Commission at its 1997 substantive session that the item entitled 'Fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament' should be included in the agenda of the Commission at its 1998 session;

"3. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled 'Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament' and, subject to the outcome of the deliberations at the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, to set an exact date for and to decide on organizational matters relating to the convening of the special session."

The third draft resolution is A/C.1/52/L.18*, adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 71 (*l*), entitled "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures".

The fifth, sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs read as follows:

"*Recalling* the deliberations at the 1997 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission in Working Group III on agenda item 6, entitled 'Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N', where the scope of resolution 51/45 N was a major focus,

"*Welcoming* the adoption by the Disarmament Commission of the 'Guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991',

"*Noting*, with reference to its resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995, the report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms and its relevance in the context of the present resolution and of the ongoing work in the Disarmament Commission,".

Operative paragraph 1 reads as follows:

"1. *Stresses* the particular relevance of the deliberations at the 1997 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission in Working Group III on agenda item 6, entitled 'Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N' for this topic, takes note of the Chairman's paper of 9 May 1997 and other views expressed, as a useful basis for further deliberations, and encourages the Disarmament Commission to continue its efforts aimed at the adoption of such guidelines;".

I have just outlined the draft resolutions which have direct relevance to the work of the Disarmament Commission. Does any delegation wish to make a statement at this stage? I see none.

Draft provisional agenda for the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission

The Chairman: In preparing the draft provisional agenda for the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, contained in document A/CN.10/1997/CRP.6, account was taken of the relevant draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee, as I indicated a moment ago, particularly draft resolution A/C.1/52/L.21 on the Disarmament Commission.

If there are no comments, I will take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the draft provisional agenda for the 1998 substantive session as contained in document A/CN.10/1997/CRP.6.

The provisional agenda was adopted.

The Chairman: The Secretariat has informed me that the dates for the 1998 substantive session have been set from 6 to 28 April 1998. As members know, many factors are taken into consideration in arriving at these dates, particularly the intensive disarmament schedule during the year.

Are there any comments?

Mr. Danielsson (Sweden): I am sorry for the delay and I do not wish, Mr. Chairman, to delay your efficient way of proceeding with this meeting. I have a question relating to the dates.

I have been informed that there is an important meeting starting on 27 April next year. There would seem to be a collision. Perhaps through you, Sir, we could ask the Secretariat to comment on that fact.

The Chairman: I have been told by our friends in the Secretariat that there is, indeed, an overlap on 27 and 28 April. But actually, the practice of the Commission has been to finalize its work on the previous Friday. The weekend and the Monday are given to the Secretariat for preparing the documentation and the reports, and the last meeting, on Tuesday, is just to adopt the final documents.

Traditionally, what has happened in New York is that colleagues who come from Geneva finalize the work here on Friday and travel back to Geneva on the weekend. So there is a very slight overlap but, in practice, most of the people, as I said, can go back to Geneva on the weekend. That is the explanation that I have been given by the Secretariat.

If there are no further comments, I take it that the Commission agrees to hold its 1998 substantive session from 6 to 28 April.

It was so decided.

Organizational matters

The Chairman: Since we have adopted the provisional agenda for the 1998 substantive session, I believe we should seize the opportunity to establish the Committee of the Whole, as well as the three Working Groups to deal with the three substantive agenda items, as follows: Working Group I, which will deal with agenda item 4, "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned"; Working Group II, which will deal with item 5, "The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament"; and Working Group III, which will deal with item 6, "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N".

If there are no comments, I take it that the Commission wishes to establish these four bodies as I have described.

It was so decided.

The Chairman: I should like to note that, according to the provisions of the adopted reform programme, all organizational matters should be concluded at the organizational session of the Disarmament Commission. However, because there are several pending issues at this stage — such as the nomination of members of the Bureau for 1998 and the appointment of chairmen of the subsidiary bodies — it might be advisable for the Commission to suspend this organizational session until a later time, so that sufficient time will be available for further consultations on the pending issues.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Disarmament Commission to suspend the 1997 organizational session at this stage and resume the session at a later date.

It was so decided.

The Chairman: Before I adjourn this meeting, I should like to urge regional groups to proceed with their consultations on an urgent basis and to submit their nominations as quickly as possible.

The next plenary meeting of the Disarmament Commission will be duly announced in the *Journal* of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.